DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP NEWSLETTER

Guthrie County Hospital

An Affiliate of UnityPoint Health

WINTER 2025

FROM THE DESK OF...

SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING THIS WINTER

HEALTHY RECIPES

REFRESH YOUR TASTE BUDS WITH THESE HEALTHY RECIPES

FROM THE DESK OF...

Happy New Year!! Hard to believe we are already 3 weeks into the new year. The change of offices has taken place for our elected officials, and we hope that this brings good things to our local communities and our country. It's also January in Iowa and although we've seen very little snow this winter, I must say the last couple of days of cold weather, have left me with no doubt that it's January in Iowa!

Did any of you make New Years Resolutions? I make the same ones every year. They are to make healthy choices, continue to be active and exercise, and to do things I enjoy to help me relieve stress. What were your goals for 2025?

I need to let you know about some changes that are going to take place with the newsletter. Unfortunately, as most of you know prices continue to go up, the cost to mail out the newsletter is now over $2.00 per letter. We mail out newsletters to current and past attendees of our program and it is becoming cost prohibitive. We have come up with a solution that we hope will work for all of us. The newsletter, starting in February, will be on our hospital website. You can type in your search engine "Guthrie County Hospital" and our website will come up. If you click on the service heading, you will see the Diabetes Education heading and when you hover over it the newsletter will appear to the right side of it. You can click on that and then you will see winter 2025 in blue. You will click on that, and the newsletter will come up. You can then print it from the website if you would like, download it to your computer, or just read it online. If you do not have access to the internet, please let us know and we will continue to mail you a printed copy. We will send out the last printer copies in May of 2025. After that we will only mail them out to those of you who do not have internet access. We appreciate your understanding of us trying to be mindful of our cost.

The last support group we had was in November and featured recipes for Healthy Holidays. During that meeting we were asked if we could have a podiatrist come and speak at our next meeting. We are pleased to let you know that Dr. Todd Miller, DPM, has agreed to speak at our next meeting on February 20th at 7pm in Sneakers here at the hospital. Dr. Miller has been providing podiatry services here at our hospital for many years. He also has an office in Perry, Iowa.

FROM THE DESK OF...

Foot care is important for all of us, but this is especially true for those of us who have diabetes. It is important that you take good care of your feet so that you can prevent complications such as wounds, infections, and even amputation.

The weatherman has reminded us recently that frostbite can occur in as little as ten minutes for expose skin and yet I see people outside in shorts and sandals during cold weather, even extreme cold weather. This is not a healthy practice for anyone and think about how vulnerable your feet are especially if you have neuropathy and can't feel how cold your feet are getting.

Dr. Miller will share his wisdom for keeping your feet healthy and help you to determine what habits you need to establish to maintain the health of your feet.

By the time we meet winter will be in the later stages and we will be eagerly awaiting spring, so stay warm and healthy and I will see you February 20th at 7 pm in Sneakers Café' here at the hospital.

Christine Drake BSN, RN
Guthrie County Hospital Diabetes Education Coordinator

Reference:
WebMD. (2024, February 25). *Dealing with change: How it affects your mental health and what you can do to cope*. WebMD. https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/what-to-know-about-how-to-deal-with-change

Managing Nerve Pain

Peripheral neuropathy or "nerve pain" is a type of pain that can affect the hands, feet, arms and legs. Symptoms of peripheral neuropathy include tingling, pain or increased sensitivity, numbness or weakness or even open sores on your feet and legs that heal very slowly. Some people may describe it as "pins and needles" or a burning or stabbing sensation. Others don't have much sensation and feel their feet are "dead" or numb. To diagnose peripheral neuropathy and check for numbness of your feet, your provider should be completing a foot exam each year including touching your foot with a monofilament (a very small synthetic thread) to see if you can feel the small pressure on your foot. If you are unable to feel the monofilament, this could mean you have some nerve damage. If this occurs, your doctor may recommend medication to help control the painful sensations.

The best way to help treat and prevent peripheral neuropathy is by keeping your blood glucose levels within goal range by adjusting your diet, exercise routine or changing your medications. There are also several medication options available to manage the pain associated with peripheral neuropathy, but it is important to know that once nerve damage has occurred there are not any treatments available to reverse the damage.

The first drug class that can be used to treat nerve pain includes two anti-depressants, duloxetine (Cymbalta) or venlafaxine (Effexor). When first developed, these medications were marketed to patients with depression, but these medications can also be used to treat nerve pain by working increasing norepinephrine at nerve sites and decreasing the perception of pain. Both duloxetine and venlafaxine are typically dosed once daily and started at a lower dose which can be increased to help better control your pain if needed. Most common side effects of these medications include nausea, dizziness, constipation, sweating or drowsiness. If you also have restless leg syndrome, these may not be the best medications to treat your nerve pain, and your doctor should prescribe one of the following medications instead.

Another class of drugs to treat nerve pain include pregabalin (Lyrica) or gabapentin (Neurontin). These medications work by altering the way pain signals are sent through the body and brain. Pregabalin is available in immediate release and extended-release forms. The immediate release is dose 2-3 times per day where the extended-release is dosed once daily. Gabapentin is initially dosed once daily but can be dosed up to three times a day if needed for adequate pain control. Gabapentin is also cheaper than pregabalin if cost is a concern. Most common side effects of these medications include dizziness and drowsiness.

There is one more class of medications considered first line for treating diabetic neuropathy. This class is called tricyclic antidepressants, or TCAs, and includes the medications amitriptyline, desipramine and nortriptyline. While these medications are effective in treating diabetic neuropathy, they must be used with caution as these medications do have a higher risk of serious side effects caused by their anticholinergic properties, these properties include dry mouth, constipation, blurred vision, difficulty emptying the bladder, and confusion. These medications should also be avoided in people who have heart disease. These medications are usually dosed once daily at bedtime and are gradually increased to treat diabetic neuropathy.

Managing Nerve Pain

With each of these medications, your provider will most likely start you on a lower dose for 2-3 months and have you come back into the office to see how your pain is being managed. If you are still having pain, your dose will be increased, or you may be instructed to take your medication a few times a day to see if that helps with the pain. It is also common that you may need to switch to a different medication if the first one you try is not working for you. Your provider might even suggest that you take two of the above medications to help control your neuropathy pain.

There are also a few therapies applied directly to the affected area that can be used on their own or added to the above medications. These include capsaicin and lidocaine patches and are both available over the counter at your local pharmacy if you would like to give them a try. Capsaicin cream is applied four times a day to the affected area. When you first start using this medication you will notice a burning sensation that may be uncomfortable at first but will lessen as you continue to use the medication. Lidocaine patches can also be applied to the area (if the area is big enough for them to stick) and can be worn for up to 12 hours at a time to help lessen neuropathy pain. Other non-medication options include using a TENS machine which delivers electrical current to your nerves or acupuncture.

Jackie Willms, PharmD
Director of Pharmacy

References

Feldman, E. (2024). Management of diabetic neuropathy. *UpTodate*. Retrieved January 23, 2025, from https://www.uptodate.com/contents/management-of-diabetic-neuropathy?search=diabetic%20peripheral%20neuropathy%20treatment&source=search_result&selectedTitle=1%7E150&usage_type=default&display_rank=1#H1815763146.

Here are some heart healthy diabetes friendly recipes to try.

Slow-Cooker Pork Chops

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon ground mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic pepper blend
- 1/4 teaspoon seasoned salt
- 4 boneless pork loin chops (4 ounces each)
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) chicken broth

PREPARATION

1. In a shallow bowl, combine 1/4 cup flour, mustard, garlic pepper and seasoned salt. Add pork chops, 1 at a time, and dredge to coat. In a large skillet, brown chops in oil on both sides.
2. Transfer to a 5-qt. slow cooker. Pour broth over chops. Cook, covered, on low for 2-3 hours or until meat is tender.
3. Remove pork to a serving plate and keep warm. Whisk remaining flour into cooking juices until smooth; cook, covered, on high until gravy is thickened.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

4 servings per recipe **Serving Size: 1 pork chop**

279 calories, 14g fat (3g saturated fat), 57mg cholesterol, 606mg sodium, 12g carbohydrate (1g sugars, 0 fiber), 24g protein.

Diabetic Exchanges: 3 lean meat, 1-1/2 fat, 1 starch.

Cabbage Rolls

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium head cabbage (3 pounds)
- 1/2 pound uncooked ground beef
- 1/2 pound uncooked ground pork
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce, divided
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup uncooked long grain rice
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon snipped fresh dill or dill weed
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar

PREPARATION

1. Cook cabbage in boiling water just until outer leaves pull away easily from head. Set aside 12 large leaves for rolls. In a small bowl, combine the beef, pork, 1/2 cup tomato sauce, onion, rice, parsley, salt, dill and cayenne; mix well.
2. Cut out the thick vein from the bottom of each leaf, making a V-shaped cut. Place about 1/4 cup meat mixture on a cabbage leaf; overlap cut ends of leaf. Fold in sides. Beginning from the cut end, roll up. Repeat.
3. Slice the remaining cabbage; place in a Dutch oven. Arrange the cabbage rolls seam side down over sliced cabbage. Combine the tomatoes, sugar and remaining tomato sauce; pour over the rolls. Cover and bake at 350° until cabbage rolls are tender, about 1-1/2 hours.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

6 servings per recipe **Serving Size: 2 cabbage rolls**

260 calories, 10g fat (4g saturated fat), 50mg cholesterol, 694mg sodium, 23g carbohydrate (5g sugars, 3g fiber), 18g protein.

Simple Roasted Cauliflower

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 1/2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp fresh rosemary (chopped) (or 1 tsp dried rosemary)
- 6 cup cauliflower florets

PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 450° F.
2. In a large bowl, toss cauliflower with rosemary, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Spread seasoned cauliflower on a large baking sheet (use two sheets if they are crowded on one).
3. Roast for 15 minutes; remove from oven and stir.
4. Continue roasting for 10 minutes or until cauliflower is tender and lightly browned.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

9 servings per recipe **Serving Size: 2/3 cup**

Calories 40; Total Carbohydrate 4g; Total Sugars 1g; Protein 1g; Total Fat 2.5g; Saturated Fat 0g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 85mg.

Greek Yogurt Chocolate Mousse

INGREDIENTS

- 6 mini sugar-free dark chocolate bars (chopped)
- 2 cup Plain Nonfat Greek yogurt (non-fat)
- 2 tbsp honey or 4 packets artificial sweetener
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup skim milk
- 6 tbsp whipped topping (non-fat)
- 2 cup fresh raspberries

PREPARATION

1. Add the chopped chocolate to a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave the chocolate on high for 1 minute, then stir. If not completely melted, microwave for 30 more seconds, then stir until all chunks are melted. If it is still not melted, microwave another 30 seconds and continue to stir, just until the chunks in the chocolate are melted. Do not overcook.
2. In a medium mixing bowl, whip the Greek yogurt with an electric mixer until fluffy. Add the honey, vanilla, and milk, and beat some more, then add the chocolate, a small amount at a time, beating in between additions.
3. Once all of the chocolate is mixed into the yogurt, divide the mousse into 6 portions and top each portion with 1/3 cup raspberries and 1 tablespoon whipped topping

NUTRITION INFORMATION

6 servings per recipe
Serving Size: Heaping 1/3 cup with 1/3 cup raspberries and 1 tbsp whipped topping

Calories 130; Total Carbohydrate 20g; Total Sugars 11g; Protein 9g; Total Fat 3g; Saturated Fat 1.5g; Cholesterol 5mg; Sodium 35mg.

Cinnamon Flan

INGREDIENTS

- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 cups skim milk
- 1 (12 oz) can evaporated skim milk
- 3 tbsp low-calorie sugar substitute
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 cinnamon sticks (broken in half)
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 2/3 cups raspberries
- 5 large eggs

PREPARATION

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Combine the sugar and water in a small heavy-bottomed saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and cook, swirling the pan occasionally, until the caramel is lightly browned, about 12 minutes. Immediately pour the caramel into a 2-quart round baking dish, tilting the dish to evenly coat. Set aside until the caramel is cool and hardened, about 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, combine the milk, evaporated milk, sugar substitute, cinnamon powder, and cinnamon sticks in a medium saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium-low heat and cook, stirring occasionally, for 6 minutes. Remove from the heat. Stir in the vanilla and let stand 15 minutes. Remove the cinnamon sticks.
4. Beat the eggs in a medium bowl. Slowly whisk into the milk mixture until well blended. Pour into the baking dish.
5. Place the baking dish with the flan mixture into a 9 × 13-inch roasting pan and fill the roasting pan with enough hot water to come one-third of the way up the sides of the baking dish. Bake until the custard is set but jiggles slightly in the center, 50–55 minutes.
6. Transfer the pan to a rack; let cool 1 hour. Refrigerate until well chilled, about 3 hours or overnight. To unmold, run the tip of a small knife around the edge of the flan. Place a large flat plate on top of the flan and flip it over. Cut the flan into wedges and serve each wedge with 1/3 cup raspberries.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

8 servings per recipe **Serving Size: 1 wedge with 1/3 cup raspberries**

Calories 160; Total Carbohydrate 22g; Protein 10g; Total Fat 3.5g; Saturated Fat 1.1g; Cholesterol 120mg; Sodium 125mg.

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

• SAVE THE DATE •

February 20th, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.
May 15th, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.
August 21st, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.
November 20th, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.

Facilitated by Christine Drake, RN, BSN

Join us at Sneakers Café located in Guthrie County Hospital for the diabetes support group. This is a great way to share your experiences and expand your knowledge about diabetes in a relaxed educational setting.

DIABETES EDUCATION TEAM

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